

All Work and No Play:

A Structured Play Program to Improve Adult Well-being

Researchers from the School of Psychology and Public Health at La Trobe University investigated the positive health benefits of a structured one-hour play program delivered by Dale Sidebottom from Jugar Life.



The play activities incorporated in the program emphasised evidence-based principles. The program's impact was assessed using quantitative measures of effect, subjective vitality, and state mindfulness before and after the play session.

The results of the study were highly positive, indicating that:

1. There was a large and significant increase in positive affect.
2. Subjective vitality also showed a significant increase.
3. State mindfulness increased significantly.
4. Negative affect showed a significant decrease.

The results on participants' overall well-being included:

1. Positive Affect

This is a measure of positive emotions. The study found a significant increase in positive emotions. The study found a significant increase in positive feelings after the play program and a strong effect of the play program on increasing positive emotions.

2. Subjective Vitality

This measures the participants' feelings of being alive and active. There was also a significant increase in subjective vitality indicating a very strong effect.

3. State Mindfulness

This refers to the participants ability to be present in the moment. There was a significant increase in mindfulness recorded.

The study found that playing can make a big difference in how positive, energetic, and mindful adults feel, after participating in the play program. The majority of people in the study showed noticeable improvements in the following areas.



Boost in Positive Emotions: Participants experienced a significant increase in positive affect, indicating that FunShop effectively elevates mood and promotes a more joyful outlook.



Enhanced Feeling of Vitality: The FunShop significantly boosted subjective vitality, helping individuals feel more energetic and lively.



Increased Mindfulness: Attendees of the FunShop reported a notable improvement in state mindfulness, allowing them to be more present and engaged in the moment.



Reduction in Negative Emotions: The play program was associated with decreased negative affect, contributing to better mental health and reduced stress.



Strong Psychological Impact: The substantial effect sizes reported in the study demonstrated that the FunShops have a powerful and quantifiable positive impact on mental well-being.

In addition the study identified:

The study observed significant increases in positive affect, subjective vitality, and state mindfulness, along with a notable decrease in negative affect among participants. These outcomes exceeded initial expectations, highlighting the play program's potent positive impact on various aspects of well-being.



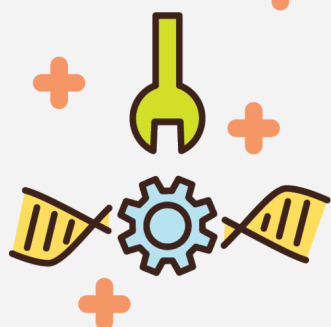
Subjective Vitality Enhancement

There was a significant enhancement in emotional vitality, confirming previous research on adult play. The study's method for measuring personal vitality demonstrated excellent internal reliability, indicating that play activities effectively boost feelings of energy and liveliness.



State Mindfulness Improvement

Significant improvements in state mindfulness were reported, consistent with findings from studies in older adults and children. While the study acknowledges challenges in measuring mindfulness, the results underscore the potential of play in enhancing present-moment awareness and attention.



Potential for Cross-Cultural Benefits

Despite the study's focus on a specific demographic, its findings open avenues for exploring how structured play can benefit diverse groups. The positive effects observed suggest a universal potential for play to enhance well-being, warranting further research across various cultural and demographic settings.



Influence of Social Affiliation

The study's findings highlight the role of social dynamics in play, as most participants were colleagues with existing relationships. This aspect suggests that familiarity and social connection might enhance the enjoyment and effectiveness of play activities, paving the way for future research into how social bonds impact the play experience.

These findings indicate that structured play programs can enhance adult well-being, suggesting broad applicability and potential benefits across diverse populations and social settings.

